



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Caring today for a healthy tomorrow

Health Matters

Ebola is Frightening, but Let's Keep it in Perspective



Adam London, RS, MPA

Health Officer

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We have heard a lot about the deadly virus, Ebola. Headlines of “Ebola Scare” and “Nurse Quarantined” seem almost like they were written for Hollywood movies. Kent County has successfully monitored two travelers to countries where the outbreak is occurring; both have been cleared and are not a risk. No one in Kent County has been diagnosed with Ebola. While we plan and prepare in case we do have an Ebola patient here, we also need to keep things in perspective. For example, there was a very dangerous infectious virus which contributed to the deaths of five Kent County residents in the past year: influenza.

Ebola is an extremely clumsy virus. It is not airborne or waterborne and is fairly difficult to transmit until the last stages of the illness. A person infected with Ebola is not contagious until symptoms appear, which can take up to 21 days. The virus spreads by direct contact with the blood or bodily fluids of a person

who has symptoms. Because of this, health care workers and the family and friends who provided care for a person sick with Ebola are at highest risk.

While we should focus on Ebola preparedness and prevention, more energy should be spent on disease and chronic illness that will affect far more Americans than Ebola. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says obesity contributes to more than 100,000 deaths a year. Pertussis (whooping cough) is in resurgence. Foodborne illnesses will kill approximately 3,000 Americans this year. Radon will cause about 21,000 lung cancer deaths. And influenza contributes to the deaths of 30,000 – 50,000 Americans on average every year. What do all of these things have in common? It is within your ability to protect yourself from all of these real and present dangers. Last season's flu was quite powerful, especially

at the onset of illness. The flu can have serious complications for children under the age of five, the elderly, and people with weak immune systems. The influenza vaccination available this year through the health department protects four common strains. The cost of the vaccine injection is \$39; FluMist nasal spray, a live, preservative-free vaccine, is available for \$41. FluMist is available for people ages 2-49; people 50 and up should get the injection.

The Health Department can only bill Medicaid and Medicare. Cash, check, MasterCard, Visa, or Discover are also accepted.

To make an appointment at any of our four clinic locations, call (616) 632-7200. You can also schedule online at www.stickittotheflu.com. Flu shots are also available from your physician and from pharmacies throughout Kent County. Most of those locations will bill private insurance.

Follow us:

[facebook.com/
kentcountyhealth](https://www.facebook.com/kentcountyhealth)

twitter.com/kchd



Make the holidays
healthy!

Practice food safety at
home:

[www.tinyurl.com/
KCHDfoodsafety](http://www.tinyurl.com/KCHDfoodsafety)

KCHD Preparedness Team Excels in Planning

The Kent County Health Department, along with eight other health departments in West and Central Michigan, recently had their respective emergency preparedness plans/systems reviewed for Project Public Health Ready certification. This is a quality assurance review and certification provided by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO).

Over the last two years, KCHD's Emergency Preparedness Program has been working to ensure that KCHD's Emergency Operations Plan and other areas, including workforce development and quality improvement, met 287

measures put forth by NACCHO. A team composed of three peer reviewers from local and state health departments across the nation performed the initial review on KCHD's plans and systems yielding only 3 measures requiring clarification. On average, the health departments reviewed within Michigan needed to address 56 measures. KCHD should receive notification of certification at the beginning of January.

"Our team, from Environmental Health to Communicable Disease, Community Clinical Services to Community Wellness, and Emergency Preparedness to Information Technology



have a great grasp of preparedness on many levels," said Adam London, Kent County Health Officer. "Over the past two years, numerous incidents, such as flooding and illness outbreak investigations, have presented challenges, but our staff's dedication has helped us meet these challenges. We constantly plan, and are ready for the next major incident."

You can learn more about preparedness in your own home or business at: www.accesskent.com/getready.

Raising of America Examines Inequities, Challenges

We all want what is best for our children and we live in the richest country in the world, so why does child well-being in the U.S. rank 26 out of 29 rich countries? Why do we as a country allow our most vulnerable children to fall so much further behind?

The Kent County Health Department is teaming up with Strong Beginnings, First Steps, Great Start Collaborative, Family Futures, Healthy Kent and K-Connect, in an effort to educate the public about the challenges of raising children in our diverse community. We are planning a screening of "Raising of America," a one-hour documentary that explores how a strong start for all our kids leads not only to better individual learning, earning, and mental and physical health, but also to a healthier, safer, better educated, more prosperous, and more equitable America.

The screening will be held in early 2015. If you would like to participate, contact Deputy Health Officer Teresa Branson at Teresa.Branson@kentcountymi.gov. Learn more about the documentary series at www.raisingofamerica.org.



Free Adoptions, Thanks to BISSELL Pet Foundation

The BISSELL Pet Foundation is making adoption easier than ever at the Kent County Animal Shelter. Through December 31, all adoption fees are covered by the BISSELL Pet Foundation! You don't even need to pay for spay/neuter, up-to-date vaccines, and microchips— the only charge for adopters is \$12 for a dog license. All potential adopters are screened before they can adopt.

Free pet giveaways have been done in other communities with great success, according to a University of Florida study. You can learn more about adopting from the Kent County Animal Shelter at www.accessKent.com/KCAS.



KCHD Awarded \$2.18 Million REACH Grant

Kent County Health Department is being awarded \$726,661 a year over the next three years (subject to availability of funds) through the Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) initiative. The work will be focused on improving the health of those living in the Hope Zone Neighborhoods in the City of Grand Rapids by increasing:

- Tobacco-free environments,

- Access to environments with healthy food or beverage options;
- Access to physical activity opportunities;
- Opportunities for chronic disease prevention, risk reduction or management through clinical and community linkages.

Kent County will receive a total of nearly \$2.18 million over the life of the grant.



Hope Zone Neighborhoods in Grand Rapids



Send Every Pet Home for the Holidays

The Kent County Animal Shelter wants to Empty the Cages!

All Adoptions are FREE!*

Current shots and spay/neuter included!

(\$12 license fee for dogs not included)*

Saturday, December 6, 2014

8am–3pm

740 Fuller NE, Grand Rapids

616.632.7300

*Free Pizza! Giveaways!
Visit "Santa Pawz!"*

*Adoption Specials possible
thanks to funding from the*

**BISSELL Pet
Foundation!**

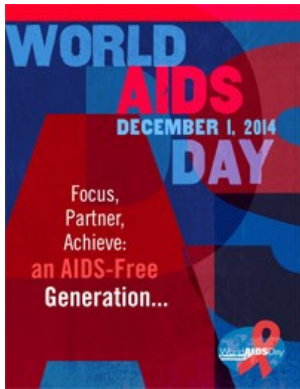
Normal Shelter Hours:

M-F 9:30 AM—1 PM*

2 PM—6:30 PM*

Closed Saturday and Sunday

***ALL ADOPTIONS MUST BE
COMPLETE ONE HOUR
BEFORE CLOSING.**



December 1 is World AIDS Day

The Kent County Health Department is making it easy for everyone to know their HIV status: a quick, painless finger poke test gives results in about 20 minutes. Our Personal Health Services staff members are certified counselors who are friendly, non-judgmental and happy to answer all your questions.

When you get tested, you will receive a gift card* for your time, education about HIV and prevention, and steps you can take to protect those you love from HIV. (*Gift cards available while supplies last.)

Walk-in Testing
Monday, December 1
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM
700 Fuller NE
Grand Rapids, MI
49503

KCHD Achieves National Accreditation



PHAB Leadership Team members, first row, left to right: Pat Draper, Barb Hawkins Palmer, Mary Wisinski, Chelsey Chmelar, Lisa LaPlante, Sharon Schmidt. **Second row, left to right:** Jim Smedes, Brian Hartl, Adam London, Kevin Bakos, Karla Black, Carolyn Quiney, Shane Green, Teresa Branson, Jill Myer, and Steve Lane.

The Kent County Health Department (KCHD) learned on September 17, 2014, that it received accreditation by the national Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). We are just the second health department in the state to achieve this high honor. The Health Department began preparations for completing national public health accreditation in January 2012. PHAB is the independent organization that administers the national public health accreditation program, which aims to improve and protect the health of the public by advancing the quality and performance of the nation's Tribal, state, local, and territorial health departments.

"The application process for PHAB is difficult, requiring hours of reviewing documentation and identifying areas for improvement," said Adam London, Health

Officer for the Kent County Health Department. "Our staff has been extremely dedicated to the process. Without their support and efforts, we could not have achieved this higher standard." In July, site visitors from PHAB credited the KCHD in several areas:

Collaborative Intent: Our community partners shared with the site visitors that they felt we were a 'neutral convener' – that KCHD is able to bring together entities with varying interests to sit at the same table to find solutions to complex issues. The review team found that our staff is consistently looking for opportunities to collaborate with groups, agencies and other partners.

(more)

Accreditation, continued

Commitment to Performance Management Systems: Staff shows a strong foundation to building Quality Improvement. This is a strong component of PHAB.

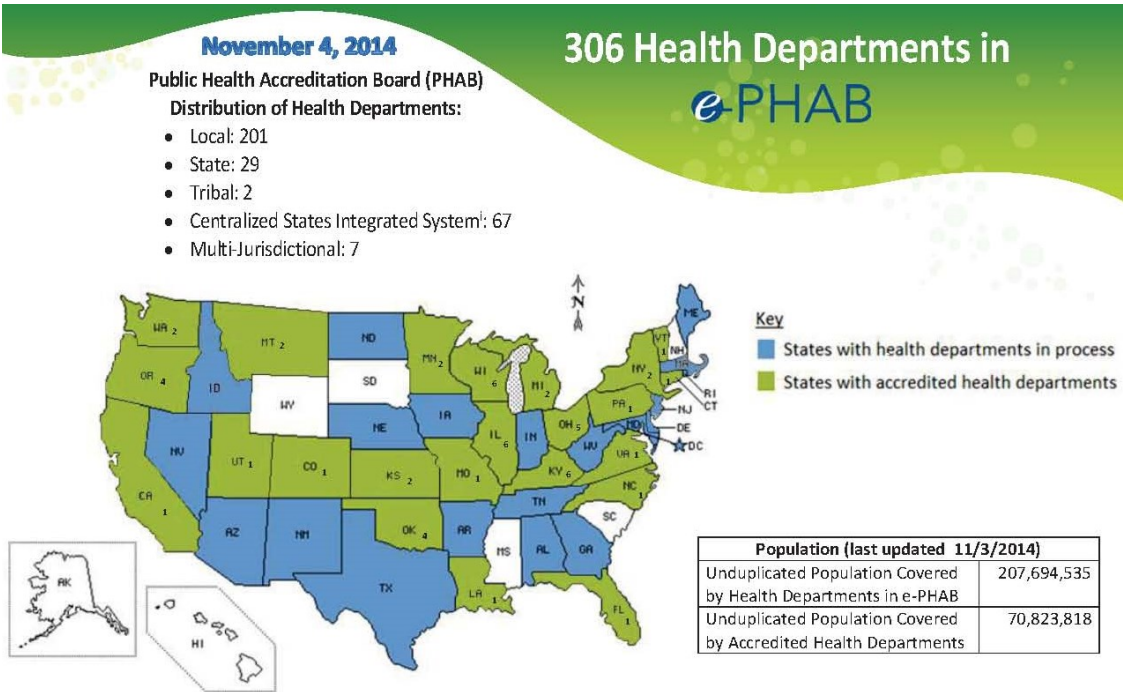
Staff are Committed to Assessment and Continued Improvement: KCHD staff look at indicators of health, review data, and look internally at how to best serve our community. Our staff has been extremely dedicated to the process.

The accreditation in Kent County brings the number of Governmental public health departments now accredited by PHAB to 54. PHAB-accredited departments now reach 70 million residents in the U.S. “Residents of a community served by a

nationally accredited health department can be assured that their health department has demonstrated the capacity to protect and promote the health of that community,” said PHAB President and CEO Kaye Bender, PhD, RN, FAAN. “On September 17, Kent County and nine other health departments joined the other 44 accredited health departments in a strong commitment to their public health mission.”

Public health departments play a critical role in protecting and improving the health of people and communities. Across the nation, health departments provide a range of services aimed at promoting healthy behaviors; preventing diseases

and injuries; ensuring access to safe food, water, clean air, and lifesaving immunizations; and preparing for and responding to public health emergencies. To receive accreditation, a health department must undergo a rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed assessment process to ensure it meets or exceeds a specific set of standards and measures. The peer- review process provides valuable feedback to inform health departments of their strengths and areas for improvement so that they can better protect and promote the health of the people in the communities they serve. “Now, 22 million more people can be assured that their health departments are ready to meet these challenges,” Dr. Bender said.



HEALTH EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE DIALOGUE WORKSHOPS

The Kent County Health Department in conjunction with Strong Beginnings and Healthy Kent is offering workshops to help engage its workforce and the community in learning through dialogue about improving community health by addressing:

- Cultural identity and multicultural self-awareness
- Perspectives on oppression and privilege
- The historical role that public health and human services have played in promoting social change, and
- How all of these things affect our efforts to improve the health of our community.

Workshop information:

- Enrollment is free and open to anyone. Only a limited number of spots are available.
- Participants must be able to attend both dates of their selected workshop.
- Participants will be given one hour for lunch and two 15 minute breaks.
- These sessions are made possible with support from the Kent County Health Department, Strong Beginnings (Federal Healthy Start) and are modeled after Ingham County Health Department's Health Equity and Social Justice Dialogue Workshops.

To register: Call or email Julie Brooks at 616-632-7290

julie.brooks@kentcountymi.gov or register at:

<https://www.accesskent.com/Health/HealthEquity/>

Two days from 9 AM – 4 PM

January 8 & 15, 2015

March 24 & 31, 2015

May 14 & 21, 2015



**HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**
Caring today for a healthy tomorrow



KCHD PERFORMANCE BRIEF

FOURTH QUARTER 2014

Focus on Community Wellness

The focus of the October 2014 Performance Management (PM) Council meeting was on strategies led by the Community Wellness Division at the Kent County Health Department. The strategies reviewed covered a series of topics including: Safe Sleep, Home Visiting, Infant Mortality, Prenatal Care, and Hearing and Vision.

Several Community Wellness Division staff attended the meeting to provide verbal updates to the PM Council. Overall, the updates were positive and indicated that progress is being made toward the achievement of the numerous strategies assigned to Community Wellness staff.

[KCHD PM Council]

The KCHD Performance Management (PM) Council was established in October 2013 and began reviewing performance data in January 2014. It is comprised of 10 members, including at least two representatives from each KCHD Division.

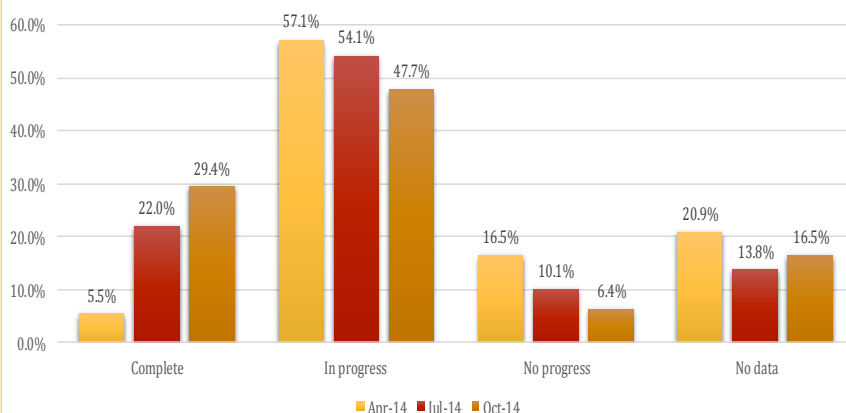
This group meets quarterly to review progress on 2013-2018 KCHD Strategic Plan goals, objectives, and strategies. In April 2014, one Division per quarter began providing a more in-depth review of progress by attending the PM Council meetings.

Key Community Wellness Achievements

- ⇒ Considerable collaboration is occurring to complete the strategies assigned to Community Wellness (CW) staff. This collaboration goes beyond staff who belong to the CW Division.
- ⇒ The Kent County Nurse Family Partnership program is participating in a national research project called MIHOPE, for which the program has achieved participant recruitment targets.
- ⇒ The opening of the South Clinic has led to improvements in the availability and access to dental services for pregnant women in Kent County.
- ⇒ The Hearing and Vision program has been making great strides to improve communications with screening sites and follow-up providers.

The bar chart below illustrates KCHD performance data collected during the second, third, and fourth quarters of 2014. A consistent, positive trend continues for “completed” strategies. Because more strategies are being completed, KCHD has seen the percentage of strategies reported to be “in progress” or having “no progress” decrease each quarter. There was a slight increase in the percentage of strategies classified as having “no data”. This slight increase could be reflective of staffing transitions within KCHD management, the need for KCHD leadership to reassign strategies and/or evaluate the strategic plan in 2015 to realign strategic directions with KCHD resources.

Reported Strategy Implementation:
Progress Data (April - October 2014)



Kent County Health Department

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KCHD has been in the business of
providing health services to
Kent County since 1931.

The Health Department is home to nearly
260 employees including public health
nurses, sanitarians, health educators,
technicians, public health
administrators, and specialized staff at
the Kent County Animal Shelter.

The Health Department operates one
main clinic and three satellite clinics
located in Kentwood, Rockford, and
Grand Rapids.

www.accessKent.com/Health



Mission Statement:

To serve,
protect and
promote a
healthy
community
for all.